

**To:** Harrison, Melissa[Harrison.Melissa@epa.gov]  
**Cc:** Zito, Kelly[ZITO.KELLY@EPA.GOV]; Purchia, Liz[Purchia.Liz@epa.gov]; Harris-Bishop, Rusty[Harris-Bishop.Rusty@epa.gov]; Smith, Paula[Smith.Paula@epa.gov]; McClain-Vanderpool, Lisa[Mcclain-Vanderpool.Lisa@epa.gov]; Lee, Monica[Lee.Monica@epa.gov]; Hull, George[Hull.George@epa.gov]; Keener, Bill[Keener.Bill@epa.gov]; Kao, Jessica[Kao.Jessica@epa.gov]; Smith, Roxanne[Smith.Roxanne@epa.gov]; StClair, Christie[StClair.Christie@epa.gov]; Card, Joan[Card.Joan@epa.gov]  
**From:** Gray, David  
**Sent:** Tue 8/11/2015 5:22:17 PM  
**Subject:** Region 6 update - GKM Response 8/11/15

## Region 6 Update - 8/11

In New Mexico, EPA has a team of two federal on-scene coordinators, two water quality experts and thirty technicians and contractors responding to the spill as it reaches communities in the state. EPA mobile command center is operational in Farmington.

EPA has placed personnel with NMED in Santa Fe to enhance planning and communication between the agencies. EPA Region 6 has one federal on-scene coordinator and public information officer stationed with Unified Command in Durango, Colorado.

EPA is continuing collecting water quality samples from nine locations in the river near intakes for Aztec, Farmington, Lower Valley Water Users Association, Morning Star Water Supply System and the North Star Water User Association. Each of these locations will continue to be monitored as the spill makes its way past these areas. EPA has two dedicated water quality experts available in New Mexico to assist the five drinking water systems.

Water quality laboratory results from six samples taken on Aug 6 and 7 before the spill reached Aztec and Farmington areas confirm that water conditions within the river met drinking water requirements. These results will be used by local officials to evaluate conditions after the spill to determine when water use can return to normal.

EPA is providing alternative water supply for livestock in New Mexico. This service was previously being provided by San Juan County NM.

EPA and New Mexico Environment Department are providing free water quality testing for domestic drinking water wells along the river. NMED and EPA provided a sign up booth at the San Juan County Fair for private well owners.

Teams of qualified technicians are going door-to-door to collect samples for laboratory analysis. Four teams made up of NMED and/or EPA technicians sampled 14 private domestic wells yesterday. The effort will grow to seven teams today.

NM Department of Game and Fish biologist and game warden monitoring found wild birds with stains were able to fly and rehabilitation has not been required. NM Game & Fish did not observe any fish kills during yesterday's overflight.

Sent from my iPhone

Sent from my iPhone

On Aug 11, 2015, at 11:47 AM, Harrison, Melissa <[Harrison.Melissa@epa.gov](mailto:Harrison.Melissa@epa.gov)> wrote:

Thanks Kelly! Christie is compiling the info for talking points and press release. For the next few days she will be the lead.

---

**From:** Zito, Kelly

**Sent:** Tuesday, August 11, 2015 12:30 PM

**To:** Harrison, Melissa; Purchia, Liz; Harris-Bishop, Rusty; Smith, Paula; Gray, David; McClain-Vanderpool, Lisa; Lee, Monica; Hull, George; Keener, Bill; Kao, Jessica; Blumenfeld, Jared

**Cc:** Strauss, Alexis; Manzanilla, Enrique; Smith, Roxanne

**Subject:** Region 9 update - GKM Response 8/11/15

Hello all – Please see the Region 9 our update along with some general info about staffing, Navajo Nation coordination and a visit to the area by RA Blumenfeld. Let me know if you have additional questions or need other information.

Thanks –

Kelly

•■■■■■■■■ Region 9 continues to be in close communication with the Navajo Nation and

is coordinating with them on various efforts including sampling and community outreach.

- By mid-week, Region 9 expects to have 15 staff and contractors on site to handle emergency response, water sampling and communications/coordination with the Navajo Nation and other stakeholders.
- Additionally, Region 9 is holding daily calls with the Navajo Nation, sending Navajo National representatives daily updates via email, and Region 9 is working with the wider regional response to set up an 800 number for Navajo Nation and other citizens who are seeking to have their water tested.
- Region 9 Administrator Jared Blumenfeld plans to visit the area Thursday, going to Farmington, Shiprock and Durango

### **EPA Region 9 Activities – 8/11/15**

● Navajo officials reacted days prior to any observed impact of the Gold King Mine release on the Navajo Nation, assessing their well fields and drinking and irrigation water intake systems and issuing a precautionary "do not use" public service announcement regarding water from potentially impacted sources. On 8/8, the President of the Navajo Nation declared a State of Emergency for the San Juan River valley. Region 9 held a coordination meeting with Navajo Nation EPA (NNEPA) and Navajo Department of Public Safety. Region 9 has deployed an On Scene Coordinator (OSC) to the Durango Incident Command Post to coordinate Region 9 activities with an EPA Area Command in Region 8. The Region has also deployed a Public Information Officer (PIO) to participate in a Joint Information Center (JIC), presently in Durango, and with other the affected Federal, State, County and Tribal agencies. Region 9 deployed an OSC to the Farmington Incident Command Post (ICP) today to coordinate field activities and stakeholder requests for assistance. **The ICP is co-located with EPA Incident Commanders from Region 6 (Dallas, TX office).**

● **The Navajo EPA surface water monitoring program (Shiprock Office) collected water and sediment samples from the San Juan River - prior to the spill impact and have since established 8 fixed monitoring stations to be sampled daily. The stations stretch along the San Juan between Shiprock, NM and Mexican Hat, UT. Region 9 has provided 6 START contractors to coordinate and conduct increased sample collection and lab analysis in**

conjunction with NNEPA.

- On 8/10, contractors tried to pinpoint the leading edge of the waste water discharge plume near Hogback, NM. Though not clearly visible as before, contractors conducted conductivity monitoring and collected samples from the area in an attempt to identify downstream impacts. Also, coordination calls on 8/10 with Federal agencies, State of AZ, Coconino County and City of Page officials and Congressional representatives suggested the need for sampling even further downstream in the Glen Canyon, Lake Powell and Coconino County segments of the San Juan River. EPA has begun to coordinate efforts with those of the Bureau of Reclamation and US Geological Survey to share information.

- **NNEPA also requested drinking water sampling support immediately for Navajo operated water intakes. A USEPA drinking water expert has deployed and is working with NNEPA to inventory and assess water sources including private wells and intakes. USEPA will establish and provide a 1-800 telephone for private citizens and entities to request well water sampling.**

- Region 9 has hired a contractor to coordinate with Navajo Tribal Utilities Authority (NTUA) to deliver water to the areas impacted by the discharge. The Montezuma Creek well development area was closed as a precaution prior to any impact. EPA contractors are collecting NTUA provided water from the Sweetwater wellfield and delivering it to the Montezuma Creek service area.

- **Two Community Involvement Coordinators (CICs) arrived in Farmington Sunday. CICs met with Navajo Incident Command in Shiprock Sunday evening for an update on outreach activities to date. It was reported that by the end of 8/10, approximately 75% of Navajo communities along San Juan River had been reached by Navajo teams.** Community Health Representatives from Navajo are working to finish outreach to remaining communities. On 8/10, CICs attended two special chapter meetings arranged by Vice President Jonathan Nez and provided an update on EPA activity to date. At both chapter meetings, held at Aneth and Oljato, Vice President Nez participated, along with Attorney General Ethel Branch and local chapter officials. Present at the Oljato meeting were NNEPA Executive Director Dr. Donald Ben and special advisor to President Begaye Peterson Zah. The CICs will partner with various Navajo officials, Navajo incident command, and other responding agencies to ensure

comprehensive outreach to all affected Navajo Chapters.

---

**Kelly Zito**

Director of Public Affairs

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency - Region 9

San Francisco, CA

Office: 415.947.4306

Mobile: 415.760.9171

**Web:** EPA in the Pacific Southwest

**Twitter** <https://twitter.com/EPAregion9>

**Facebook** <https://www.facebook.com/EPAregion9>